United Nations

Daily Highlights

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FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Security Council authorizes deployment of 30,000-man strong force in Somalia for an initial period through 31 October, mandated to use force, if necessary, to ensure delivery of humanitarian assistance throughout the country; emphasizes "crucial importance" of disarmament; in Addis Ababa, agreement is reached with Somali National alliance to create transitional leadership council in Somalia.

+ Security Council unanimously demands that all parties in Liberia fully cooperate with Secretary-General and ECOWAS to ensure implementation of Yamassoukro IV Accords; will consider "appropriate measures" in support of ECOWAS if "any party is unwilling to cooperate"; request Secretary-General to consider possibility of convening meeting of President of Interim Government and warring factions.

+ The Council also welcomes tonight the acceptance by the leaders of Greek and Turkish communities in Cyprus to attend a joint meeting at Headquarters on 30 March to discuss the resumption of "substantive direct negotiations"; reaffirms that present status quo "is not acceptable".

+ France, Russian Federation, United Kingdom and United States warn Iraq that, as it remains in violation of Security Council resolutions, any provocative actions will receive firm response.

+ Secretary-General returns from Washington, D.C. where he met yesterday with United States Secretary of State on Bosnian peace negotiations, Haiti, Somalia, among other things.

+ Arrival of joint United Nations/OAS Mission in Haiti has already led to "some reduction in incidence of human rights violations" and to beginning political activity, according to report by Secretary-General.

+ United Nations confirms Serb threat to shoot down flights carrying humanitarian supplies to Bosnia and Herzegovina, if German planes take part in operation.

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For information media—not an official record

+ UNTAC strongly condemns killing of eight ethnic Vietnamese boat people in Kompong Chhnang Province by National Army of Democratic Kampuchea.

+ Secretary-General speaks about United Nations as forum and focal point for maintaining international peace and security, at meeting of American Publishers Association, Washington, D.C.

+ First United Nations regional preparatory meeting for International Year of Family, scheduled for 1994, to begin in Tunis on Monday, 29 March.

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The Security Council this afternoon authorized the deployment of 30,000-man strong United Nations operation in Somalia (ONISOM II) for an initial period through 31 October, with a mandate, for the first time ever, to use force, if necessary, to ensure the delivery of humanitarian assistance throughout the country. The Council also emphasized the "crucial importance of disarmament" and the urgent need to build on the efforts of the Unifed Task Force (UNITAF).

Acting under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter, the Council adopted unanimously a three-part resolution 813 (1993), under which it demanded that all Somali parties, including movements and factions, comply fully with the agreements concluded at the recent Reconciliation Meeting in Addis Ababa, especially the agreement on the cease-fire and disarmament. It also demanded that all Somali parties take measures to ensure the safety of United Nations personnel and other relief staff.

Under the resolution, the Council asked the Secretary-General to support "from within Somalia" the implementation of the arms embargo established by under resolution 733 (1992), using the ONUSOM II forces and to report to the Council "with any recommendations regarding more effective measures if necessary". The new operation would also assist in the repatriation of refugees and the assisted resettlement of displaced persons, with particular attention to areas where instability continues to threaten peace and stability.

While emphasizing the urgent need to build on the efforts of the Unified Task Force, the Council also asked the Secretary-General, through his Special Representative, to direct the Force Commander of ONUSOM II to assume responsibility for the maintenance of a secure environement throughout Somalia and to organize a "prompt, smooth, and phased transition" from the Task Force to ONUSOM II no later than 1 May.

Under another provision of the resolution, the Council asked the Secretary-General to maintain the fund for the maintenance of ONUSOM II, following the departure of the Task Force, and for the establishment of Somali police, and called on Member States to make contributions to this fund.

According to the Secretary-General's proposal, the estimated cost of the new operation would by $855 million for the first six months, which includes

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some $190 million for start-up costs. An unemcumbered balance of $70 million left from the previous United Nations operation in Somalia will be used to partially fund start-up requirements for the new operation. The cost would be considered as an expense of the Organization to be borne by Member States of the United Nations.

In a related development, the Somali National Alliance (SNA) today agreed to sign an agreement, reached between leaders of the twelve Somali factions, which calls for the creation of a transitional leadership council in Somalia.

According to a statement issued by the ONUSOM spokesman in Mogadishu, the agreement would provide for a transitional executive authority to replace the central transition administration. Also, the autonomous regional and district councils would replace the regional and district councils, he said.

The Conference on National Reconciliation in Somalia is expected to end tomorrow.

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In the first of two formal meetings this afternoon, the Security Council demanded that all parties in Liberia fully cooperate with the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) with a view to ensuring the full and prompt implementation of the Yamassoukro IV Accords of 1991.

The Council took that action by adopting unanimously resolution 812 (1993), by which it also declared its readiness to consider appropriate measures in support of ECOWAS "if any party is unwilling to cooperate in implementation of the provisions of the Yamassoukro IV Accords, in particular the encampment and disarmament provisions".

The Council also called upon all States to abide by and comply with the general and complete embargo on all deliveries of weapons and military equipment to Liberia, imposed by resolution 788 (1992), under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter.

It further asked the Secretary-General, in consultation with ECOWAS, to consider the possibility of convening a meeting of the President of the Interim Government of National Unity in Liberia and the warring factions, to restate their commitment to the implementation of the Yamassoukro IV Accord "within an agreed timetable".

In his report to the Council, dated 12 March, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali said the United Nations was ready "to extend whatever assistance" to end the conflict in Liberia. He also pointed out that Liberia represented a good exemple of systematic cooperation between the United Nations and a regional organization.

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His Special Representative for Liberia, Trevor Gordon-Sommers, has held a number of meetings and talks with different political and military factions in that country.

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In a Presidential Statement tonight, the members of the Security Council welcomed the acceptance by the leaders of the Greek and Turkish communities in Cyprus of the Secretary General's invitation to attend a joint meeting on 30 March to discuss "the timing, modalities, and preparation for the resumption of substantive direct negotiations as mandated by the Security Council".

The Council also reaffirmed its position that "the present status quo was not acceptable" and that a mutually acceptable overall framework agreement "should be achieved without delay", on the basis of the Set of Ideas which have been endorsed by the Security Council.

It further called on the leaders of the two communities in Cyprus to fully cooperate with the Secretary-General, and reaffirmed its determination to lend its active support to the Secretary-General's effort.

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Iraq has been advised that it remains in violation of the full range of Security Council resolutions and has been warned that any provocative actions would receive a firm response from the coalition forces in the Persian Gulf war.

The warning was conveyed today to the Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations, Nizar Hamdoon, by four Permanent Representatives to the United Nations of France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States. According to a statement issued following a meeting this afternoon with the Iraqi Ambassador, the four said they were committed to "the preservation of the territorial integrity of Iraq" and to "easing the suffering of the civilian population" through the implementation of resolution 706 and 712. They emphasized that it was "in Iraq's own interest to comply fully with all relevant Security Council resolutions" and stressed their determination to ensure such compliance.

Iraq's compliance with the Security Council's resolutions is being reviewed every 60 days.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali returned from Washington, D.C. today, where he yesterday met with United States Secretary of State Warren Christopher for a discussion of the Bosnian peace negotiations and yesterday's agreement with the Bosnian Government on the map and interim arrangements for the Republic. Discussions were also held on the situation in Macedonia, El Salvador, Western Sahara, Haiti and Somalia.

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Earlier, the Secretary-General, accompanied by his Senior Political Adviser, Alvaro de Soto, met with Baena Soares, the Secretary-General of the Organization of American States (OAS), to discuss the situation in Haiti and cooperation between the United Nations and the OAS.

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The recent arrival of the International Civilian Mission in Haiti had "already led to some reduction in the incidence of human rights violations and to a climate in which political activity was beginning to increase or to be planned", according to Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali. The Mission, which is a joint effort by the United Nations and the Organization of American States (OAS), is investigating and reporting human rights violations throughout Haiti.

In a report to the General Assembly on the human rights situation in that country, dated 24 March, the Secretary-General said the deployment of observers in Haiti could indeed have an inhibiting effect on political repression. However, he warned, the Mission could expect the emergence of serious problems if many months went by before a legitimate government enjoying public confidence returned to power. He therefore recommended that a comprehensive review of the operational plan for the Mission take place no later than September 1993.
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It was confirmed today at Headquarters that Serb forces had threatened to shoot down United Nations flights carrying humanitarian supplies to Bosnia and Herzegovina, if German planes took part in the operation.

According to a United Nations spokesman, representatives of Germany, the United States, France, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) were currently meeting in Germany to determine further action.

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The United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) today condemned "in the strongest possible terms" the killing of eight ethnic Vietnamese boat people in the Kompong Chhnang Province by the National Army of Democratic Kampuchea (NADK).

According to a statement issued by the spokesman for UNTAC, the attack, which involved a group of 10 to 20 assailants, took place on Wednesday, 24 March, in the morning. The victims were shot dead while fishing from three boats.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, addressing a dinner meeting hosted by the American Publishers Association in Washington, D.C. yesterday, said the concepts of preventive diplomacy, expanded peace-keeping and post-conflict peace-building must be understood and accepted if the United Nations peace-keeping is to deal successfully with changing realities.

He emphasized that the concept of preventive diplomacy required personal contacts, good offices and fact-finding missions, and early-warning systems. In that context, he said, the decision to establish a United Nations Protective Force in the former Republic of Macedonia was taken out of concern to prevent a wider Balkan war.

On the issue of expanded peace-keeping, Mr. Boutros-Ghali said the protection of humanitarian relief supplies was a new necessity of peace-keeping in a growing number of conflicts around the world. That need was most "dramatically" evident in Somalia in recent months. In the former Yugoslavia, he said, the United Nations forces were authorized to secure the Sarajevo airport and related lines of communication so that vital humanitarian assistance could be flown to the besieged population.

The concept of post-conflict peace-building, he noted, involved sustained efforts to identify and support structures to consolidate peace and create greater trust and well-being among peoples. Without such efforts, no peace agreement was likely to endure for long, he added.

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The first United Nations regional preparatory meeting for the International Year of the Family, scheduled for 1994, will be held in Tunis from 29 March to 2 April.

Participants from 64 States in Africa and Western Asia, as well as observers from organizations and other States, will review the situation of families in those regions and their place in the respective national social agenda. They also will survey national and international preparations for the Year and adopt recommendations for the observances of, and follow-up to, the Year.

The meeting's recommendations, together with those adopted at three other regional preparatory meetings to be held this year - in Valetta, for Europe and North America, in Beijing, for Asia and the Pacific, and in Cartagena, for Latin America and the Caribbean - will be submitted to the regional commissions, which are monitoring preparations for the Year in their respective areas.

The General Assembly proclaimed 1994 as the International Year of the Family in a resolution adopted in 1989, with the view to creating a greater awareness of the family as the "natural and fundamental unit of society".

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